



PORTLAND TIMBERS2 PRESS RELEASE

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SAM JOSEPH NAMED MLS NEXT PRO GOALKEEPER OF THE YEAR, THREE T2 PLAYERS LISTED TO BEST XI Joseph, Nicklas Lund and Eric Izoita named to MLSNP Best XI

PORTLAND, Ore. – Timbers2 goalkeeper Sam Joseph has been named the MLS NEXT Pro Goalkeeper of the Year, the league announced today. Additionally, Joseph, defender Nicklas Lund and midfielder Eric Izoita have been named to the 2026 MLS NEXT Pro Best XI.

Joseph, 23, earns the Goalkeeper of the Year award and Best XI selection following a record-setting season for T2. He led all MLS NEXT Pro goalkeepers in clean sheets (12), helping the Portland side set a new league single-season record with 14 shutouts. The San Diego native recorded 65 saves in 23 appearances this year and came up with nine penalty shootout stops throughout the season, helping T2 earn important points in the historic campaign. Additionally, Joseph received back-to-back Goalkeeper of the Month awards in July and August after keeping five clean sheets and going undefeated over that span.

Lund, 24, finished the regular season with two goal contributions (1G, 1A) while leading T2 in minutes played with 2,493, which ranked as fourth most across all players in MLS NEXT Pro. The German defender helped anchor T2's backline with the second-fewest goals allowed (29) and second-fewest losses (4) in the 2026 campaign. Lund was also named a finalist for Defender of the Year.

Izoita, 19, registered six goals and three assists this season, ranking second most in both categories for T2. The midfielder recorded the fourth-most key passes in all of MLS NEXT Pro play with 59 throughout the campaign. The Homegrown player also signed his first professional contract for the first team on September 25, and has logged two goal contributions (1G, 1A) in two appearances for the Timbers in the 2026 MLS season.

The Goalkeeper of the Year award and trio of Best XI selections mark the first for T2 in its MLS NEXT Pro era. Timbers2 tied Atlanta United 2 for the most represented club in the Best XI with three players each.

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